exports or if we had imported large quantity of onions one-and-a-half or two months before, it would have had some effect. You know that it is primarily the onion price; but there was some sympathetic rise in the price of every practical commodity and this is a psychological factor. Therefore ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI N.K.P. SALVE (Maharashtra): Do you put the blame on election?

SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEDGE: No, no, my dear Salve, I would like to tell you that such a phenomenon had taken place two times, one in 1980 and other one in this year. The 1980 elections were held after two-and-a-half years of the Janata Party rule and that was the resurrection of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. What was the issue? Onion ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: It is too much to accept all these things. Saying it was because of elections, giving this kind of excuses, ... (*Interruptions*) People have rejected these arguments ...(*Interruptions*)

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम: आप खड़े हो जाते हो, सुनते तो हैं नहीं ...(व्यवधान)... आप हर बात पर खड़े हो जाते हो. ..(व्यवधान)...

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: There should be a limit to all these things ...(*Interruptions*)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Please sit down ...(*Interruptions*) Please sit down when I am standing ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: We are walking out of the House ...(*Interruptions*)

श्री नरेश यादव: हम इसका विरोध करते हैं ..... (व्यवधान)...

SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE: What is this? What is the provocation for this Walk-Out? (*Interruptions*)

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: We are interested to hear him but not this excellent story telling ...(*Interruptions*)

SHRI S. VIDUTHALAI VIRUMBI: We are unable to get proper response from the Government. Therefore, we walk out.

(*At this stage some hon. Members left the Chamber.*)

SHRI RAMAKRISHNA HEGDE: If they had wanted some excuse, they could have invented some other excuse.

Finally I would like to say that the Congress men are very lucky with onions. In 1980, they won the elections on the basis of onions and now also they have won. My suggestion is the Congress Party should choose onions as its symbol.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now it is quarter to two. Would you like me to adjourn till 2.30 or till quarter to three?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: We would like the House to be adjourned till quarter to three.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Shri Nitish Kumar will make a Statement on the Railway accident which occurred at Khanna. Then he will have to make it at 2.45 p.m. So, the House is adjourned till 2.45 p.m.

The House then adjourned for lunch at 1.46 P.M.

The House reassembled after lunch at forty-seven minutes past two of the clock.

The **Vice-Chairman (Shri Sanatan Bisi)** in the Chair.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): We will like up the statement to be made by the Minister.

STATEMENT REGARDING ORDINANCE

Prasar Bharti (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Amendment Ordinance, 1998

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI): Sir, I lay on the Table, a statement (in English and Hindi) explaining the circumstances which had necessitated immediate legislation by the Prasar Bharti (Broadcasting Corporation of India) Amendment Ordinance, 1998.

[Placed in Library *See* No. LT2398/98]

...(*Interruptions*)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Just a minute, please. (*Interruption*) Please sit down (*Interruptions*)

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA (West Bengal): Please. Let me speak, Sir. We seriously object to the statement that is being laid most innocuously, most innocently and most surreptitiously, violating all norms of parliamentary standard and morality. You will remember, Sir, that on the last day of the last Session, the majority of the House stood up collectively and asked for extension of the Session so that we could discuss the Prasar Bharti Bill. We were given to understand by the then Minister, the Madam, that the Presidential approval had not come and, therefore, the House could not take up the matter for discussion. In my considered view and in the view of many of us who had looked into this aspect, the paper relating to the Presidential approval was not sent at the point of time the then Minister was making the statement. That paper was not sent. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI (Uttar Pradesh): This is a very strange kind of objection, Sir.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: It is not only an objection. I am also suggesting that the then Minister had deliberately not given the correct information and, therefore, her behaviour tantamounts to misleading the House. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI: I am on a point of order. (*Interruptions*)

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS, MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI RAM NAIK): Has he given it in writing? (*Interruptions*). He cannot make such allegations. (*Interruptions*). Has he given notice? I object to it as Parliamentary Affairs Minister. (*Interruptions*).

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Please take your seats. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I do it with all responsibility. I do it as a Member of this House. I do it knowing fully well the consequences of it. According to my information, the papers were deliberately sent late so that plea could be made the basis for not raising the Bill for discussion. Sir, we demanded that the Session be extended by one day. A majority of the Members demanded that. We even signed a petition to the hon. Rashtrapatiji — a majority of the Members, not some Members, Sir. The Government did not pay any heed to us. Taking advantage of the lacuna in the business procedure — because the House cannot force the Government to place the Bill — neither the hon. Chairman ...(*Interruptions*)

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): No, no.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, taking advantage of that, a *has been perpetrated on this House. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI SANGH PRIYA GAUTAM (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, this is unparliamentary.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, please sit down.

...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): Let the Minister defend himself.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Please, sit down. I will give you a chance. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, I am on the last sentence.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): He has a point of order. Please take your seat. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: No, Sir, ...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): He has a point a order. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI: Sir, he has misused the opportunity given to him. ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): He has a point of order. Kindly take your seat.

*Expunged as ordered by the Chair

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THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): No, no.

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SHRI SANGH PRIYA GAUTAM (Uttar Pradesh): Sir, this is unparliamentary.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta, please sit down.

...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): Let the Minister defend himself.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Please, sit down. I will give you a chance. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Sir, I am on the last sentence.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): He has a point of order. Please take your seat. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: No, Sir, ...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): He has a point a order. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI: Sir, he has misused the opportunity given to him. ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): He has a point of order. Kindly take your seat.

*Expunged as ordered by the Chair

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: I want to know from the Government when this Ordinance will be placed for discussion.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Please take your seat. He has a point of order. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI: The hon. Member said that he has brought forward this statement surreptitiously. ...(*Interruptions*)... These two things are separate. ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Please take your seat. I know that there is a point of order. You see, I am prepared to hear all of you. Now there is a point of order. Unless and until those things are disposed of, I cannot allow anyone.

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम: पहले यह माफी मांगें। (व्यवधान) इन्होंने जो कहा है कि वह अनपार्लियामेंटरी लैंग्वेज है (व्यवधान) इन्होंने अनपार्लियामेंटरी लैंग्वेज यूज़ की है। (व्यवधान)

श्री दीपांकर मुखर्जी: आप तो सवेरे से बोल रहे हैं (व्यवधान) बैठिये आप। (व्यवधान)

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI: Sir, my point of order is, the word *is unparliamentary. Sir, this word should be removed from the records. ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Please sit down. Let me dispose of his point of order. Hon. Members, unless and until I allow any member, please don't stand up on your own. Mr. Ravi, what is your point of order?

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI (Kerala): Sir, my point of order is very simple. The hon. Chairman, in his wisdom, gave a ruling in this House at 1 o'clock that a notice be circulated that as soon as the House reassembles at 2.45 p.m., the statement of the Railway Minister on the train accident will be taken up. There are many other items on the Order paper. Any other item on the Order Paper can be taken up only after the discussion on the statement of the Railway Minister is over. So, my point of order is, when the Chairman has given a ruling that at 2.45 p.m. the House will discuss the statement of the Railway Minister ... ...(*Interruptions*)...

*Expunged as ordered by the Chair

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: He cannot interrupt like this.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Why are you getting up? ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: The ruling of the Chairman stands, and as per that ruling, at 2.45 p.m. the first item before the House is the statement of the Railway Minister. That is a serious matter. Any other item on the Order Paper can be taken up only after finishing the clarifications on the statement of the hon. Railway Minister. So, I want a ruling on that. ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Now we will take up the statement by the Railway Minister.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Sir, does the Paper tabled stand withdrawn? The Minister was trying to... ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): First, we will take up the statement of the Railway Minister. ...(*Interruptions*)... Please take your seat.

श्री दीपांकर मुखर्जी: नीतीश कुमार जी आप इनको समझाइये (व्यवधान) यह लोग सुधरेंगे नहीं (व्यवधान) ये लोग सुधरने वाले नहीं हैं। ...(व्यवधान)... मैं आपसे अपील करता हूं...(व्यवधान) ये कभी नहीं सुधरेंगे, नीतीश जी, आप नहीं सुधारेंगे इनको तो कौन सुधारेगा? आप इन को सुधारिए। ...(व्यवधान)..

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): Please do not stand up. (*Interruptions*) Please take you seats. (*Interruptions*) Please do not stand up. (*Interruptions*)

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: I am on a point of order.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): It is over now.

SHRI JOHN F. FERNANDES: I am on a different point. The business listed should be taken up soon after the Question Hour. The hon. Minister was not present due to obvious reasons. He came after lunch. (*Interruptions*) When the Minister is not here, the precedence is, he has to explain to the Chair as to why he was not present. Otherwise, the business would

be listed for the next day. I do not know what is the reason for the hon. Minister ...(*Interruption*)...

उपसभाध्यक्ष (श्री सनातन बिसि): आप बैठिए, आप बैठिए। ...(व्यवधान) मैं बोल रहा हूं आप बैठिए। ... (व्यवधान)

Please take you seats.

SHRI MUKHTAR NAQVI: Sir, ...(*Interruptions*)...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): I have not permitted you. (*Interruption*)

Now, we will take up the Railway matter.

SHRI T.N. CHATURVEDI: Sir, what about the word that he has used, that a * has been committed on the Parliament? I want a ruling.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (SHRI SANATAN BISI): We will take up after the statement. (*Interruptions*) It will come up again.

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER

Railway Accident near hanna Railway Station of Ambala Division, Northern Raiulway on 26th November, 1998.

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): Sir, it is with the feeling of utter sorrow and a sense of deepest anguish that I stand today to apprise the House regarding details of an unfortunate side collision of 3152 Dn Jammu Tawi - Sealdah Express with derailed coaches of 2903 Up Golden Temple Mail infringing the down line on Ambala-Ludhiana section of Northen Railway's Ambala Division. The collision occurred at about 3.13 hrs. on 26th November 1998.

In this accident, as per the latest reports, 208 passengers have lost their lives and 141 passengers had sustained either grievous or simple injuries. In addition, 57 passengers were discharged after rendering first aid. The injured have been admitted to various hospitals in Khanna, Ludhiana and other nearby places and utmost care is being taken to render the best possible medical treatment. The list of dead so far identified and list of injured passengers has been displayed at enquiry booths set up at different locations.

In the early hours of 26th November 1998, 2903 Up Golden Temple Mail passed Khanna station run through on the Up line at 3.10 hrs. The train was running 50 minutes behind schedule. At almost the same time, at 3.09 hrs, 3152 Dn Jammu Tawi-Sealdah Express passed Chawapail station run through on the Down line. This train was running 18 minutes behind schedule. The block section between Khanna and Chawapail is 10.8 Kms. long and normally it takes each train around 7 minutes to cover the block section Travelling in the opposite direction the two trains would normally cross each other after approx. 3.5 to 4 minutes.

At around 3.13 hrs, 3 minutes after passing Khanna, 9 coaches of 2903 Up positioned 10th to 18th from train engine derailed. Of these 9 derailed coaches, 3 coaches in the middle, positioned 14th to 16th from train engine fouled the down line. The front portion of 2903 Up consisting of train engine and first 9 coaches came to stop about 1 Km. from the site of derailment. It is on record that the Over Head Equipment tripped at around 3.13 hrs.

Immediately thereafter 3152 Dn moving on the down line collided with the derailed coaches and both the driver and the assistant driver of the unfortunate train perished in this accident. The collision resulted in derailment of the train engine and first 7 coaches of 3152 Dn some of which were totally mangled.

As soon as information about this accident was recieved, Medical Relief Vans and Accident Relief Trains from both Ambala and Ludhiana were immediately ordered and rushed to the accident site. The Divisional Railway Manager, Ambala along with doctors and Divisional Officers immediately proceeded to the site of accident. General Manager, Northern Railway, along with his Principal Heads of Department also left for the accident site to supervise rescue and relief operations.

Soon after learning about this unfortunate accident, I along with the Chief Minister of Punjab, accompanied by Chairman Railway Board, Member Engineering, Member Mechanical and other senior officers of Railway Board visited the site of the accident

*Expunged as ordered by the Chair